

## Al Panek retires

# Wyden names Smith Warner new labor liaison

Barbara Smith Warner has been hired as a field staff representative and labor liaison for Oregon U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden. She succeeds Al Panek, who is retiring at the end of February after serving 12 years in that position.

Smith Warner is well known in labor circles. She worked for the national AFL-CIO as a state legislative issues coordinator and as a campaign directing against several anti-union ballot measures sponsored by Bill Sizemore.

Smith Warner was the campaign director for former Labor Commissioner and IBEW Local 48 member Dan Gardner. From 1993 to 1996 she was the Western Regional field coordinator for the National Association of Letter



BARBARA SMITH WARNER

Carriers. She also has worked as campaign director for Forward Oregon and Future PAC.

More recently, Smith Warner has worked as a consultant for E.G. Enterprises, where she has assisted in the re-election campaigns of Wyden, Gov. Ted Kulongoski, and U.S. Rep. Earl Blumenauer.

Her first day as a Wyden staffer will be March 1.

Panek, 63, is a 34-year member of the Teamsters Union. He served as president of Teamsters Joint Council 37 and as secretary-treasurer of Local 162. He retired in 1997.

Smith Warner can be reached at 503 326-7525.

## IN MEMORIAM

**KELLY ANN PENDELL**, vice president of National Association of Portland Letter Carriers Branch 82, died Feb. 6 of cancer. She was 51.

Born Kelly Epling, she grew up in the Sellwood area of Portland, attended St. Agatha Catholic School and LaSalle High School, graduating in 1975. She married Mark Pendell in 1978, had two children, and joined the U.S. Postal Service in 1985 as a letter carrier assigned to Southeast Portland's Creston station.

Pendell soon became a union steward, and in 2000 was elected vice president of Branch 82 — a full-time union staff position. In that job, she handled member grievances, organized pickets to oppose Postal Service privatization, and worked long hours phone-banking for union political campaigns as a member of the NALC Carrier Corps. She was re-elected four times.

Pendell helped her union build closer relationships with members in smaller towns. Having spent much of her childhood on her family's farm in Mist, Oregon, she was an avid lover of horses, dogs, and cats — including strays who would turn up at the union hall and be adopted as unofficial



Branch 82 members.

Pendell was active in the union's benevolent activities. Under her leadership, donations increased substantially in the NALC Stamp Out Hunger food drive and the Muscular Dystrophy Association Labor Bowl Challenge.

Personable and compassionate, she was well-loved. After she was diagnosed with melanoma, she went around to postal stations raising awareness of the need to use sunscreen. Skin cancer is a hazard for letter carriers, who must be outdoors during times of day when it's best to stay out of the sun. It was thought her cancer had been removed, but its spread to other parts of her body was discovered after she had a seizure at a post office in September.

Her daughter Dawn is a letter carrier at Portland's West Slope station, and a steward alternate with Branch 82.

A memorial was held Feb. 13 at St. Agatha Catholic Church in Sellwood, where Pendell was a lifelong parishioner.

Local 82 is planning a celebration of life, though a date had not been set as of press time.

## Teamsters at Oak Harbor Freight offer to return to work

The Teamsters Union is calling off its strike at Oak Harbor Freight Lines, and announced Feb. 12 an offer to return to work. About 600 Teamsters from the Portland and Seattle area have been on strike since Sept. 22.

The offer comes after the National Labor Relations Board agreed to an out-of-court settlement of unfair labor practice charges against Oak Harbor, which were the grounds for the strike. Under

the settlement, Oak Harbor will post a notice promising not to break labor law. The union is appealing that settlement.

U.S. labor law lets employers permanently replace workers who strike over economic disagreements, but not workers who strike to protest "unfair labor practices," as labor law violations are known. Because the unfair labor practice charges were resolved, the strike could be deemed economic if

workers stayed out — and they could be permanently replaced. On the other hand, the union's offer to return to work obligates Oak Harbor to take them back. That will likely mean job losses for scabs.

The union said the offer to return was contingent on the company allowing every worker to return to their positions, free from reprisal, and for Oak Harbor to return to the bargaining table.

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